

## Abstract

The invention relates to a method and an apparatus for encoding  
5 images, more particularly to an encoding unit in conjunction with  
a library of pictorial entities and image qualifiers. The method  
and apparatus provide encoding an image by using a code factor  
table in conjunction with a set of element codes. The resulting  
image code allows the set pictorial elements of an image and their  
10 associated image qualifiers to be represented by a compact code  
uniquely representing a given configuration of pictorial elements.  
The use of the resulting image code facilitates the transmission  
and storage of images requiring only the code to be sent or stored.  
The invention further provides a computer readable medium  
15 comprising a program element that direct a computer to implement  
the encoding process.